



The League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria

THE VOTER

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July 2016

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IMPORTANT DATES

**Wednesday, July 20,
5:30 – 7 pm. Summer
Renewal Social, 1020
NE Glen Oak,
Peoria.**

**Thursday, Sept. 29.
Early Voting Begins!**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you to everyone who made 2015-16 such a good and active year for our League, our members, and our community.

Thanks to everyone who has stepped-up to be on our board, chair a committee, or work on projects in 2016-17. With elections and our ReDistricting referendum (presumably) on the November ballot, and the municipal, school board, ICC, judicial, and township positions on the April ballot, this will be a busy year. I hope you will all volunteer to help.

Pat Landes and Farrell Davies spent a long weekend in June at our National LWV Convention. Thanks to them for taking the time and energy to participate in Washington, DC. Their report is in this issue.

Summer historically is slower for the League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria, but not this year.

- Summer Social/renewal is July 20 at Dave Koehler and Nora Sullivan's house. Please come and bring a friend as a prospective member. No cost....a social.
- The study committee looking at the water company buyout is meeting through summer
- The ReDistricting Committee is meeting every two weeks working on how to pass the referendum in November
- Our League is developing a "Running for Office" candidates' class with ICC for October of this year for people considering running for office or helping with someone else's campaign.
- Voter Service is working on candidate forums, registering voters, and previewing a Voting Rights movie.
- We continue to get feedback and questions about the e-Transparency survey that we did in April. The feedback is mostly very good.

Election judges are needed for the November election. The day is long - 5:30am -7/8pm. Pay is around \$130-150. Consider it. Call the election office of your county to find out what is involved- 494-8683 for Peoria and for Tazewell 477-2267.

We welcome your help in any and all of our projects. See you July 20.
-- Cheryl Budzinski, president

Change & Engagement

LWVUS Convention, June 2016, Washington, DC

We were proud to represent the LWVGP as delegates to the convention, and have the privilege to be part of the 686 voting delegates gathered to conduct the business of the organization. Just as we do at our annual meeting, we set the program, approved the budget, amended the by-laws, and elected officers. We also appreciated the formal and informal opportunities to tell the Peoria story and learn from other Leagues. Below is a summary of the decisions of the convention, plus some of the key points we thought would be helpful to us as we make democracy work.

Substantive votes approved:

- Program 2016-18
 - League-wide Campaign for Making Democracy Work will engage Leagues nationwide in advancing core democracy issues
 - Voter protection and mobilization
 - Election reform
 - Money in politics, constitutional amendment, redistricting
 - Redistricting (concurrence with position proposed by LWVUS Redistricting Task Force)
 - Behavioral Health (concurrence with LWV Colorado position, including amending the LWVUS Health Care position)
 - Retaining all current LWVUS positions in Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy
- Budget
 - No increase in PMP (Per Member Payment, the dollar amount our League pays to the LWVUS for each member) of \$32, despite budget challenges
- Bylaws
 - Changes to Types of Membership for Voting Members
 - “Citizens at least 18 years” of age changed to “**Persons** at least **16** years of age”. Change does not require citizenship to be a requirement and opens up voting membership to younger population.
- Resolutions were passed on the topics of:
 - Gun violence
 - Gun safety research funding
 - Statehood for DC
 - Our Children’s Trust Fund (environmental)
 - Full implementation of EPA Clean Power Act
- Election of Officers and Board (uncontested slate, see website for details)
 - New LWVUS President is Chris Carson (CA)

Messages:

- Most of the guest speakers mentioned how the League is considered trustworthy and held in high regard. Other interesting comments from speakers included:
 - Government is an effective way to solve problems.
 - Voting is a right, not a privilege.
 - Immoral to try to win an election by preventing people from voting.
 - Voting is not the ball game, but it gets you into the arena.
 - Message for impact – be aspirational, positive, give solution.
 - This is the first presidential election since the decimation of the VRA.
 - Put people back in the center of democracy.
 - The LWV creates a space for people to find a common ground.
 - Democracy is like being on a raft, it doesn’t go down, but your feet get wet.

- Ari Berman, author of Give Us the Ballot: The Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in American, was key note speaker:
 - Said in his reporting/research he always checks in with the local/state Leagues for his stories.
 - The Voting Rights Act was one of the most transformational laws ever passed.
- Elizabeth MacNamara, Outgoing president
 - The vote is the symbol of equality in America.
 - We are the only living legacy of the suffrage movement.
 - Give everyone a place at the table.
 - Must be mindful of our voices during the current election of unusual rhetoric and historic nomination of a woman for president.
 - Stop using the word “non-partisan”, and replace with “we do not support or endorse any candidate or political party”.
 - Will be sending out guidelines to help with messaging and media (Who may asking questions to get comments re woman for president, rhetoric. We can't be used). We must reframe the questions and give the League position.
 - LEWEB (Web service used by many Leagues, including our own) was not budgeted due to budget challenges and the need to increase PMP by \$2 to fund.
- Wylecia Wiggs Harris, Executive Director – will be redesigning the organization 18-24 months
 - 2 words to describe us – Change & Engagement
 - Must evolve and define our future, our choice is to evolve or cede our legacy
 - Business as usual is not acceptable
 - Need to have “and” conversations, not “but” conversations
 - Themes for the future
 - New engagement
 - Diversify
 - Embrace technology (which is shaping voters)
 - Have bias for action
 - Our mission: have impact, be relevant, be visible
 - Need to be relevant to voters, donors, members; be THE organization for to register and turn out voters and reform elections; redistricting; and campaign finances.
 - Create doors of opportunity.
 - Be prepared to fight the fights of this generation and the generations to come.
- Chris Carson, new president
 - The League was born out of a massive political and social upheaval.
 - We used to be the only source of information for voting, but now voters are drowning in information.
 - We have to change to meet the real world. Choose our battles strategically. Find different ways to connect.
 - We are in a constant battle to protect the right to vote.
 - We need to:
 - Adapt
 - Reach new members
 - Engage with the personal touch
 - We need to focus, we can't do everything.
 - We need to strategize at each of the three levels of the League and integrate those strategies at all levels to achieve our mission.
 - Local Leagues need to adapt and change to engage members in new ways such as using social media and technology.
 - State Leagues need to build and strengthen local Leagues, recognizing that differences exist among them. They also need to pursue national agendas such as redistricting and voting rights.

- National League needs to focus on core issues and to unite all Leagues through strategies that address those issues on a state-by-state basis.
- Formulate a new winning plan
 - If we are going to survive, we need to recruit and engage younger, more diverse members.
 - Create new engagement paths.

Submitted by Farrell Davies and Pat Landes

RENEW RENEW RENEW

Renew your League of Women Voters' membership (expires June 30)

Your membership gives the League the political clout to make democracy work!

3 ways to renew, plus more membership categories

Please choose the renewal option that works best for you

1. In person, you are invited* to attend the:

Summer Renewal Social, Wednesday, July 20, 5:30 – 7 pm

The home of Dave Koehler & Nora Sullivan, 1020 NE Glen Oak, Peoria

Renew your membership in person w/check or cash, plus celebrate our League's successes this past year & hear about the exciting year coming up. Please bring prospective members.

OR

2. Online, go to www.lwvqp.org and use PayPal to renew.

OR

3. By mail, use form here and mail a check payable to LWVGP.

You and your guests are invited to the Summer Renewal Social regardless of which renewal option you choose. And, remember that membership is open to both men and women.

As a member you will receive electronically our newsletter, *The Voter*, and alerts on breaking action in IL and Washington, D.C. You will also have opportunities to:

- Connect with and strengthen our community.
- Help shape the policy decisions that affect our lives.
- Learn more about and foster dialog on a broad range of issues.
- Help preserve our constitutional rights and liberties.

* RSVP for Summer Renewal Social to Pat Landes, landes.pat@gmail.com, 309-648-3504.

Invitations have been mailed and include pro-rated credit for 2016/17 dues for each new member that has joined since July 1, 2015.

2016/17 League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria Mail-in Membership Renewal Form

Please select and circle your desired membership category and fill out the following:

- Name(s) _____
- Mailing address: _____
- Primary phone (s) & email address(es) _____
- _____
- Make check payable to LWVGP for the circled membership amount, and mail this form and check to LWVGP Treasurer:
Dick Williams, 5802 W. Woodbridge, Peoria, IL 61615

Category	Individual	Household
Regular	\$62	\$93
Student/ Young Professional/Scholarship	\$31	n/a
Defenders of Democracy		
• Susan B. Anthony	\$100	\$150
• Carrie Chapman Catt	\$200	\$300
• Eleanor Roosevelt	\$300	\$450

Membership categories:

- *Household = 2 members living at the same address. Student = full-time student. Young Professional = member 30 or younger*
- *Scholarship = limited income, contact Membership Chair Pat Landes 309-648-3504*
- *Defenders of Democracy = increased level of support acknowledged in Voter.*
Thank you, your membership makes democracy work!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: Susan & Richard Scott

Join our ReDistricting Committee working on the campaign strategy to get voters to

VOTE YES

on the referendum to change the Illinois Constitution on the November ballot. We need change!
Our next meetings: Wednesday July 13 and July 27 at 6pm at the Schnucks Community Room.

Connie Romanus and Gary Stella, LWVGP Chairs

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League of Women Voters
of Greater Peoria

623 W. Stratford, Peoria, IL 61614

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

ON THE WEB:

www.lwvqp.org

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